

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**

1. **(Currently Amended)** A pneumatic tire comprising

b1 a tread portion provided with a block pattern being asymmetric about the tire equator, said tread portion having an inside tread edge and an outside tread edge to be placed on the inside and outside of a vehicle, respectively,

outside lateral grooves extending from the outside tread edge to a tread center region beyond the tire equator, each said outside lateral groove having a groove center line X0 inclined towards one direction with respect to the tire circumferential direction at an angle  $\theta_0$  of from 40 to 60 degrees with respect to the tire circumferential direction,

inside lateral grooves extending from the inside tread edge to the tread center region, each said inside lateral groove having a groove center line X5 inclined at an angle  $\theta_5$  of from 70 to 100 degrees with respect to the tire circumferential direction,

each portion between the circumferentially adjacent outside lateral grooves divided into outside blocks by outside connecting grooves extending thereacross, said outside connecting grooves comprising a first groove, a second groove, a third groove and a fourth groove arranged in this order from the outside tread edge toward the inside tread edge,

the first outside connecting groove having a first groove center line X1, the second outside connecting groove having a second groove center line X2, the third outside connecting groove having a third groove center line X3, the fourth outside connecting groove having a fourth groove center line X4, the first to fourth groove center lines X1 to X4 inclined reversely to the groove center lines X0 of the outside lateral grooves with respect

B/ to the tire circumferential direction, wherein the inclination angles  $\theta_1$ ,  $\theta_2$ ,  $\theta_3$  and  $\theta_4$  of the first, second, third and fourth groove center lines X1, X2, X3 and X4, respectively, with respect to the tire circumferential direction are in a range of from 20 to 50 degrees and [being] different from each other, and the inclination angles satisfy the following condition:

$$\theta_1 > \theta_2 > \theta_3 > \theta_4,$$

each portion between the circumferentially adjacent inside lateral grooves is divided into inside blocks by at least one inside connecting groove extending thereacross, said at least one inside connecting groove having a groove center line X6 inclined at an angle  $\theta_6$  of more than 0 degrees with respect to the tire circumferential direction towards the same direction as the outside lateral connecting grooves, wherein

the inclination angles  $\theta_1$ ,  $\theta_2$ ,  $\theta_3$ ,  $\theta_4$ , and  $\theta_6$  of the center lines of said outside connecting grooves and said at least one inside connecting groove are gradually decreased from the outside tread edge to the inside tread edge, and

angle differences  $\theta_1 - \theta_2$ ,  $\theta_2 - \theta_3$ , and  $\theta_3 - \theta_4$  are not less than 5 degrees.

2. (Previously Cancelled).

3. (Cancelled)

4. (Previously Added) The pneumatic tire according to claim 1, wherein the inclination angle  $\theta_4$  of the center line X4 of the fourth outside connecting groove is larger

pd  
than the inclination angle  $\theta_6$  of the center line X6 of said at least one inside connecting groove

5. (Cancelled)

6. **(Currently Amended)** The pneumatic tire according to claim 1, wherein  
~~the inclination angle  $\theta_6$  of the center line of said at least one inside connecting~~  
groove  $\theta_5$  is substantially 90 degrees.

7. **(Currently Amended)** The pneumatic tire according to claim 1, wherein  
~~the inclination angle  $\theta_6$  of the center line of said at least one inside connecting~~  
groove  $\theta_5$  is more than 90 degrees but not more than 100 degrees.

8. A combination of pneumatic tires comprising a left tire for one side of a vehicle  
and a right tire for the other side of the vehicle,

each of the left tire and right tire comprising

a tread portion provided with a block pattern being asymmetric about the tire  
equator, said tread portion having an inside tread edge and an outside tread edge to be  
placed on the inside and outside of the vehicle, respectively,

outside lateral grooves extending from the outside tread edge to a tread center  
region, each said outside lateral groove having a groove center line X0 inclined towards

B  
one direction with respect to the tire circumferential direction at an angle  $\theta 0$  of from 40 to 60 degrees with respect to the tire circumferential direction,

inside lateral grooves extending from the inside tread edge to the tread center region, each said inside lateral groove having a groove center line X5 inclined at an angle  $\theta 5$  of from 70 to 100 degrees with respect to the tire circumferential direction,

each portion between the circumferentially adjacent outside lateral grooves divided into outside blocks by outside connecting grooves extending thereacross, said outside connecting grooves comprising a first groove, a second groove, a third groove and a fourth groove arranged in this order from the outside tread edge toward the inside tread edge,

the first outside connecting groove having a first groove center line X1, the second outside connecting groove having a second groove center line X2, the third outside connecting groove having a third groove center line X3, the fourth outside connecting groove having a fourth groove center line X4, the first to fourth groove center lines X1 to X4 inclined reversely to the groove center lines X0 of the outside lateral grooves with respect to the tire circumferential direction, wherein

the inclination angles  $\theta 1$ ,  $\theta 2$ ,  $\theta 3$  and  $\theta 4$  of the first, second, third and fourth groove center lines X1, X2, X3 and X4, respectively, with respect to the tire circumferential direction are in a range of from 20 to 50 degrees and different from each other, and the inclination angles satisfy the following condition:  $\theta 1 > \theta 2 > \theta 3 > \theta 4$ ,

each portion between the circumferentially adjacent inside lateral grooves is divided into inside blocks by at least one inside connecting groove extending thereacross, said at least one inside connecting groove having a groove center line X6 inclined at an angle  $\theta 6$  of

B1  
more than 0 degrees with respect to the tire circumferential direction towards the same direction as the outside lateral connecting grooves, wherein

the inclination angles  $\theta 1$ ,  $\theta 2$ ,  $\theta 3$ ,  $\theta 4$ , and  $\theta 6$  of the center lines of said outside connecting grooves and said at least one inside connecting groove are gradually decreased from the outside tread edge to the inside tread edge.

9. (New) A combination of pneumatic tires according to claim 8, wherein the outside lateral grooves of the left tire and the outside lateral grooves of the right tire are inclined in the same direction.

10. (New) A combination of pneumatic tires according to claim 8, wherein the groove center lines X0 of the outside lateral grooves are straight.

11. (New) The pneumatic tire according to claim 1, wherein the groove center lines X0 of the outside lateral grooves are straight.

12. (New) The pneumatic tire according to claim 1, wherein:  
the first groove center line X1 is straight,  
the second groove center line X2 is a cranked line,  
the third groove center line X3 is a cranked line; and  
the fourth groove center line X4 is straight.

pl

13. (New) The pneumatic tire according to claim 12, wherein  
the groove center lines X5 is a cranked line, and  
the groove center line X6 is straight.

